

October 24, 2005

Secretary of Agriculture, Mike Johanns
Farm Bill
1400 Independence Avenue, SW
Washington, DC 20250-3355

Dear Mr. Johanns,

Please take into consideration my responses and comments to the USDA Farm Bill Forum questions.

QUESTION 1: How should farm policy address any unintended consequences and ensure that such consequences do not discourage new farmers and the next generation of farmers from entering production agriculture?

ANSWER: There needs to be a Crop Loss Program in place to ensure financial security allowing people to continue farming.

QUESTION 2: How should farm policy be designed to maximize U.S. competitiveness and our country's ability to effectively compete in global markets?

ANSWER: To allow the U.S. to compete in global markets, all imported goods should be required to meet the same safety regulations set forth by the USDA.

QUESTION 3: How should farm policy be designed to effectively and fairly distribute assistance to producers?

ANSWER: Farm producers should be able to maintain contact with FSA on a local level, since FSA is the grassroots of USDA.

QUESTION 4: How can farm policy best achieve conservation and environmental goals?

ANSWER: The government (on a state or federal level) should pay for the implementation of any conservation program that is a requirement of farmers.

QUESTION 5: How can Federal rural and farm programs provide effective assistance in rural areas?

ANSWER: Service should not be based on farm population numbers because when it is, service is actually pulled further and further away from the rural community. In the rural community the role of the County Committee is beneficial to maintain contact on a local level. People in the rural community aren't ready for 100% computer applications/functions just yet. Don't lose the personal touch!

QUESTION 6: How should agricultural product development, marketing and research-related issues be addressed in the next farm bill?

ANSWER: The government should not be directly involved in it, but rather monitor it ONLY.

COMMENT: Commodity programs should be looked at very carefully, in specific reference to the Direct and Counter Cyclical Program (DCP). Farmers should be weaned off this program slowly. If the program continues, base acres/crop information should be continually updated to remain current. For example drop off the oldest year of yield information and add the most recent year information. The money from this program should be going to the people that have grown the crop. It does not make sense to pay a farmer that has never grown corn, a payment for corn base acres.

Sincerely,

Robert Porter

C O C committeemen.

for Essay - Caledonia County

Vermont



OFFICE OF THE EXECUTIVE
SECRETARIAL, USDA

Secretary of Agriculture Mike Jones ~~Nov-4-65~~ 3:23

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